



EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

The Parliament of Victoria's Education and Training Committee is conducting an *Inquiry into Geographic Differences in the Rate in which Victorian Students Participate in Higher Education...or...*

'Does where you live affect whether you go to uni?'

It's an issue that affects young people more than anybody else, so the Committee needs to hear your views.



What is a Parliamentary Inquiry?

Committees are groups of Members of Parliament (MPs) appointed to investigate specific issues (like school uniforms, harmful alcohol use or bushfires). These investigations are called *Parliamentary Inquiries*.

A committee gathers evidence by asking the community and experts to share their views on the *Terms of Reference*, a list of the topics the inquiry must cover. People can comment in writing (*a submission*), or in person at a *public hearing*.

After considering the evidence the Committee writes a report and makes recommendations to the Government about what should be done. The Government doesn't *have* to do what the report recommends, but it *does* think carefully about how to respond—so inquiries help the Government to make informed decisions with input from the community.

Contributing to a parliamentary inquiry is a way for all Victorians, including students and young people, to influence Government decisions and make a genuine difference.

How can I get involved?

Get writing! The easiest way you can contribute to a parliamentary inquiry is by making a written submission. Your submission can be as short or long as you like; contain fact, opinion or both; and deal with one topic covered by the inquiry or all of them.

Unless you request otherwise, your submission will be published on the Committee's website, and will become part of the permanent public record of the inquiry. Your voice will become part of Victoria's parliamentary history.

There are some questions on the other side of this page to give you some ideas....

How can I get others involved?

If you are a teacher, principal, or student representative, here are some ideas to help others in your school community participate in this inquiry:

- Publicise the inquiry in your school community by running a story in your school newsletter or announcing the inquiry at assembly.
- Conduct a research project to collect some data or opinions about this topic in your school.
- Write a submission in class, such as an English class, a Politics class, or a careers discussion group. The class could discuss the issues and make group or individual submissions.
- Ask your school's Student Representative Council or student leaders to put together a submission representing the views of the school community.

For more information visit the Committee's website at: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc or contact the friendly Committee staff on etc@parliament.vic.gov.au or (03) 8682 2823.

Submissions for this inquiry will be accepted throughout 2008.



Does where you live affect whether you go to uni?

This material is designed to help you prepare a submission to the Education and Training Committee's *Inquiry into Geographic Differences in the Rate in which Victorian Students Participate in Higher Education*.

Option 1: Key Research Questions

The questions below set out the issues the Education and Training Committee will be exploring in the inquiry. Your submission may address as many of these as you wish; a thoughtful response to a few questions is sometimes better than trying to cover them all.

Are students from different geographic areas (eg regions, suburbs, or localities) in Victoria...

... more or less likely to apply for university?

... more or less likely to receive or accept university offers?

... more or less likely to complete a university course once they enrol?

Is this because students from different geographic areas...

... stay at school for longer, or leave earlier?

... choose different subjects or courses at school?

... choose different post-school pathways (eg TAFE, apprenticeships, or employment)?

... have greater or fewer university campuses/courses available in their community?

... are affected by other factors, such as economic, social or cultural issues?

What effect does going to university (or not) have on...

... students from different geographic areas in Victoria?

... their families and communities?

... skills shortages and the Victorian economy?

What could be done to address any barriers to university participation for students from different geographic areas?

Option 2: Tell us your story...

The Education and Training Committee would like to know how things happen in *your* community. Think about your own story, and about the schools, students and wider community in your local area. The following questions might give you some ideas.

Are students from your local area more or less likely than others to go to uni? Why or why not?

Is this a good thing or a bad thing?

What post-school pathways do people in your local area typically follow?

What do students in your local area know about uni life and uni courses?

What information is available to help them make decisions about going to uni?

Who can they discuss their decisions with?

When people in your local area are deciding whether to apply to uni or accept a place, what might persuade or discourage them?

What concerns might they have about getting into uni and being successful once they are there?

Do you think students in your local area feel able to follow whichever pathway most appeals to them after school?

What could be done – by government, universities, parents, schools or others – to make sure people from your local area can go to uni if they want to?

Submissions may be posted to The Executive Officer, Education and Training Committee, Parliament House, Spring Street, EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002, or emailed to etc@parliament.vic.gov.au.

Further information, including official Terms of Reference, can be found at www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc/.